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Contact Communications

Phone (850) 245-0150



Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Announces Largest Seizure of Illegal Vapes in Florida History

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier announced the largest seizure of illegal and contraband vaping products on the Nicotine Dispensing Device Directory in Florida history following a series of coordinated actions by the statewide Vape Task Force. The joint operations with the Enforcement Unit of the Florida Attorney General's Office, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, and local law enforcement targeted vape shops unlawfully selling products that violate Florida law and pose serious risks to children and consumers.

"These businesses are knowingly selling illegal products that are designed to attract children and evade Florida law," **said Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "This record-breaking seizure sends a clear message: if you profit off addiction, deception, and dangerous substances, we will find you and shut you down."

"Florida law is clear, and FDACS is committed to enforcing it," **said Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson**. "These illegal products threaten public health, undermine legitimate businesses, and too often are designed to target children. We will continue working with our fellow law enforcement partners to remove these dangerous and unlawful products from store shelves and protect Florida families."

"These joint task force operations demonstrate Florida's unwavering commitment to protecting our communities—especially our children—from illegal and dangerous products," **said Department of Business and Professional Regulation Secretary Melanie S. Griffin**.

"Working alongside the Office of the Attorney General, FDLE, FDACS, and our local law enforcement partners, DBPR is taking decisive action to hold bad actors accountable and to remove unlawful vapes, nitrous oxide products, and other prohibited substances from the marketplace. We will continue to use every enforcement tool available to ensure retailers follow the law and that Florida families are protected."

"The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office is proud to be a part of this team effort," **said Okaloosa County Sheriff Eric Aden**. "It involved effective and worthwhile partnerships designed to protect our communities and keep our young people safe. These products are not harmless and when they're sold illegally or marketed towards minors, getting them off the streets is a mission worthy of this combined effort."

I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication demonstrated by our officers and our partner agencies in this operation,” **said Milton Police Chief Jennifer Frank.** “This joint effort underscores the strength of cooperation between local and state entities. Our community’s safety remains a top priority, and we will continue to work tirelessly to enforce the law and protect our youth from harmful and illegal substances

Across four task force operations, law enforcement and regulatory partners seized a total of 2,183 contraband vapes, along with nitrous oxide canisters, charges, and related drug paraphernalia. The seizures included 263 illegal vapes in Clermont, 636 in Ocoee, 855 in Okaloosa County, and 423 in Milton.

In addition to illegal vaping products, officers seized 195 nitrous oxide canisters from Unique Vape and Cigar during a compliance check, as well as 7 more in Milton. Law enforcement also confiscated 50 nitrous oxide chargers, commonly referred to as “crackers,” along with balloons used for inhalation. The owner of Unique Vape and Cigar, Golam Farooque was arrested on 8 felony counts of Illegal Sale of Nitrous Oxide by OCSO. Under F.S.S. 893.145, nitrous oxide chargers and associated items are classified as drug paraphernalia.

The FDACS also conducted regulatory inspections and removed thousands of illegal products from store shelves. In Clermont, FDACS removed 2,054 packages of product from six stores, while in Ocoee, the department removed 6,181 packages of product from eight stores. FDACS is currently finalizing product removal totals from enforcement actions in Okaloosa County, Milton, and Gulf Breeze.

Products were removed from sale for numerous violations of Florida law, including failure to meet container and labeling requirements, lack of child-resistant packaging, unlawful advertising and marketing practices, and packaging, business names, logos, colors, or additives designed to appeal to children. Additional violations included references to illegal or unlawful substances, promotion of marijuana use, and the presence of controlled or prohibited substances such as 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), tianeptine, and hemp extract containing more than 0.3 percent total delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol on a wet-weight basis.

The Vape Task Force is a multi-agency enforcement effort focused on protecting Florida consumers and keeping illegal, dangerous products out of the hands of children. Investigations and inspections remain ongoing statewide.

Attorney General Uthmeier established the Vape Free Florida Fund in March 2025 to aid in the enforcement of the State’s nicotine and vapor laws following a \$79 Million settlement with JUUL Labs. Keeping these dangerous products out of the hands of children remains a priority of the Office of the Attorney General.

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